

Clean Copy of the Pending Claims

4. A method of creating an online library on a first computer coupled to a network, the method comprising the steps of:

allocating a storage area on the first computer, the storage area being configured to hold one or more information objects, said one or more information objects being a web page, a bookmark, a document, an e-book, an image, a piece of music, a piece of audio, a video clip, or a movie;

transmitting an information object for storage in the storage area;

storing the an information object in the online library; and

permitting access of the information object by a requester based on a secure access authorization key.

5. The method of claim 4 further comprising the step of:

authenticating the requester based on (a) a description of information accessible using the authorization key, (b) an expiration time for the authorization key, (c) the trustworthiness of the requester, (d) the requester's a password, (e) the Internet address of a device used by the requester, and (f) the time of day/day of week of the request.

6. The method of claim 4 further comprising the step of:

permitting restrictive access to the information object by the requester based on whether the requester is authorized to view, modify, edit, add to, or delete a particular portion of the information object to which access is provided.

7. The method of claim 4 wherein the transmitting step comprises the step of:

dragging and dropping the item of interest into the storage area.

8. The method of claim 4 wherein the transmitting step comprises the step of:
directing a third party to transmit a digital item to the user's library.
9. The method of claim 8 wherein the directing step comprises the step of:
authorizing the third party to access the user's personal library.
10. The method of claim 9 wherein the authorizing step comprises the step of:
providing the third party the user's password.
11. The method of claim 4 further comprising the step of:
automatically increasing the amount of space if an information object requires
more space than was available.
12. The method of claim 4 further comprising the step of:
scanning the information object for viruses.
13. The method of claim 12 further comprising the step of:
if the information object contained a virus, then discarding the information object.
14. The method of claim 12 further comprising the step of:
if the information object contained a virus, then recording the identity of the
source of the information object that contained a virus.
15. A method of securely distributing a first party's personal information, the
method comprising:
storing the first party's personal information, said first party's personal
information comprising at least one of a plurality of information objects, said at least one

of a plurality of information objects being a web page, a bookmark, a document, an e-book, an image, a piece of music, a piece of audio, a video clip, or a movie;

associating with each information object at least one of a plurality of security clearance levels, said security clearance level being assignable to each information object at any granularity, thereby enabling access to selected portions of the stored first party's personal information;

receiving from a requester a request to access the first party's personal information, said request accompanying an authorization key to access the first party's personal information;

selecting a first portion of the first party's personal information authorized to be transmitted to the requester, said selection being made in accordance with one or more selection criteria established by the first party;

formatting a response; and

transmitting the formatted response to a device designated by the requester.

16. The method as in claim 15, wherein the step of formatting a response comprises the step of:

configuring the response message in a manner suitable for delivery to the requester's device.

17. The method as in claim 15, wherein the step of formatting a response comprises the step of:

selecting a suitable format from a selection of available formats.

18. The method as in claim 15, wherein the step of formatting a response comprises the step of:

using stored rules to format a response message.

19. The method as in claim 15, wherein the step of formatting a response comprises the step of:

selecting a specified data communication protocol for transmission.

20. The method as in claim 15, wherein the step of formatting a response comprises the step of:

encrypting or translating the response.

21. A method of permitting license-pooled access to restricted information by a number of simultaneous users, the method comprising:

creating an online library in a storage area communicatively coupled to a server computer, said online library comprising at least one information object, which information object is restricted as to N number of users ($N \geq 1$) who could simultaneously access said object;

pooling N licenses;

recording license information for the information object for N licenses;

permitting up to N simultaneous users to access the information object, each user being permitted to access the information object for a predetermined time;

preventing access to the information object by any additional users;

after the predetermined time period for a user A expires, revoking the user A's access to the information object.

22. The method as in claim 20, wherein the information object is copyrighted material.

23. The method as in claim 22, wherein the copyrighted material is a web page, a

document, an e-book, an image, a piece of music, a piece of audio, a video clip, or a movie.